10 FAM 650
INFORMATION RESOURCES PROGRAMS

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

10 FAM 651 INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTERS

10 FAM 651.1 General

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

As new technologies and improved access to digitized information have evolved, expanding the range of options for retrieving, packaging, and delivering information, traditional libraries have been transformed into mission-integrated Information Resource Centers (IRCs), committed to deploy the majority of their information capability and resources to advance U.S. Government interests by increasing awareness and understanding of its policies among foreign nationals who influence how U.S. actions are perceived abroad.

10 FAM 651.2 IRC Responsibilities

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

a.   Information Resource Centers (IRCs), located abroad, advance U.S. Government policy goals by identifying and selectively disseminating information to host country contacts who influence policy and public opinion on issues central to U.S. interest. An Information Resource Center is designed to serve post and mission-wide information needs in support of U.S. public diplomacy objectives.

b.   IRCs should use the most efficient and cost-effective technology and delivery systems appropriate to the infrastructure of the host country, and is an integral component of the overall U.S. official presence abroad.

10 FAM 651.3 Headquarters Support to IRC

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

a. The Office of Geographic Liaison's Information Resource team (R/IIP/G/IR) provides headquarters-level support to Information Resource Centers worldwide and to the Information Resource Officer (IRO) corps through:

(1) Development of IRC policy and operating guidelines;

(2) Information resources product development and acquisitions;

(3) Centralized administrative and technical support; and

(4) Specialized training in the field of information resources.

b. The R/IIP/G/IR Team Leader serves as the headquarters spokes-person on issues concerning the Information Resource Officers corps and the Information Resource Center program in general. The R/IIP/G/IR Team Leader monitors IRO and IRC reports, and briefs officials from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Exchanges (ECA), regional bureaus, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG), and field posts on IRO and IRC activities, as needed.

10 FAM 651.4 Professional Guidance for IRC

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

R/IIP/G supports a specialist corps of Foreign Service Information Resource Officers who are assigned regional responsibilities for providing professional guidance and direction to the Information Resource Centers within a specified geographic area.

10 FAM 651.5 IRC Annual Plan

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

Information Resource Centers are required to establish an Annual Plan in the appropriate format which documents posts' commitment to using information Resource Center resources to meet both public diplomacy goals and mission relevant information needs of key mission staff; gives the Coordinator for International Information Programs (R/IIP) and regional bureau officials relevant, up-to-date information about the programs, the technological environment of the IRC, its clients, resource base and personnel; and provides the contextual framework and action plan for Information Resource Officer consultations. The Office of the Inspector General requires a copy of the Information Resource Center Annual Plan as a part of the pre-inspection documentation on posts to be inspected.

10 FAM 652 INFORMATION RESOURCE SUPPORT BY R/IIP/G/IR

10 FAM 652.1 General

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

a.   CII/G/IR supports the information resource needs of Information Resource Centers worldwide by creating information products specifically geared to the work of U.S. missions abroad and by identifying appropriate commercial and U.S. Government information resources, including the following.

b.   **Information Products**. Develops, produces, and distributes information products in a variety of formats specifically formulated to meet the needs of U.S. mission Information Resource Centers abroad, such as but not limited to the *Information USA* database, available in CD-ROM and on-line formats.

c.   **Information Resource Center Home Page**. Maintains a home page with policy and administrative guidance, Information Resource Center and Information Resource Officer directories, access to other electronic resources on the Internet, and access to the State Department Library;

d.   **Public Diplomacy Collection**. Participates in the selection of information resources on public diplomacy collection for the State Department Ralph J. Bunche Library;

e.   **Document Delivery**. Locates and delivers books and articles to Information Resource Centers abroad on request through established interlibrary loan procedures and the use of commercial document delivery services; and

f.   **New Electronic Information Products**. Identifies, evaluates, recommends/acquires and provides training in the use of new electronic information products and services for use by Information Resource Centers worldwide; and

g.   **Electronic Gateways**. Develops and manages electronic gateways to facilitate access to online resources within the R family of bureaus and offices and at U.S. Information Resource Centers abroad.

10 FAM 652.2 Administrative Support

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

a. **Centralized Online Database Contracts.** Negotiates and funds centralized contracts for major U.S. commercial and government online databases, fundamental to the electronic Information Resource Center program;

b. **Database Coordination.** Works with commercial database vendors to improve existing products to better meet the needs of Information Resource Centers and information professionals;

c. **Procurement.** Provides guidance and assistance with procurement of U.S. information resources for Information Resource Centers, by establishing Blanket Purchase Agreements and standardized "consortium" pricing for print and electronic information resources, and by serving as a liaison between posts abroad and U.S. vendors;

d. **Acquisitions Documentation.** Provides bibliographic documentation to facilitate the procurement of standard U.S. reference resources by Information Resource Centers in the field; and

e. **Fee Recycling.** Manages the program through which Information Resource Centers may charge fees for specific services.

10 FAM 652.3 Technical Support

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

a. **General Support.** Provides technical support on IRC electronic resources to Information Resource Centers and Information Resource Officers in the field;

b. **Electronic Resources and Systems.** Identifies and evaluates for field use automation products unique to Information Resource Center work.

c. **Electronic Communications.** Establishes and maintains an electronic communication systems among Information Resource Officers stationed around the world, such as e-mail discussion groups, digital video conferencing, etc.

10 FAM 652.4 Specialized Training

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

a.   Because of the highly technical and specialized nature of modern electronic Information Resource Center work, specialized training for Information Resource Center staff and Information Resource Officers is an essential component of headquarters support. R/IIP/G/IR supports specialized training programs, specifically geared to Information Resource Centers and Information Resource Officers, including the following.

b.   **Foreign Service National (FSN) Employee Program**. An annual training program for FSN employees representing Information Resource Centers at posts worldwide, focusing on the development of expert knowledge and skills specific to IRC work.

c.   **Information Resource Officer Conference**. An annual conference of Information Resource Officers to provide professional and program development to the specialist corps of Information Resource Officers.

d.   **Regional FSN Training Programs**. Workshops and conferences organized by regional Information Resource Officers and held at regional training facilities to improve technical knowledge and skills of FSN IRC employees.

e.   **New Information Resource Officer Training**. Orientation and training for newly hired Information Resource Officers.

f.   **Continuing Education Programs**. Specialized training in newly evolving aspects of information resource work for Information Resource Officers, Information Resource Center staff, and other information professionals in the Bureau of Public Diplomacy.

10 FAM 652.5 Professional Guidance

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

The Office of Geographic Liaison (R/IIP/G) supports a specialist corps of Foreign Service Information Resource Officers who are assigned regional responsibilities for providing professional guidance and direction to the Information Resource Centers within a specified geographic area. While the majority of Information Resource Officers are assigned to posts abroad, there is a Washington, D.C.-based Information Resource Officer on each geographic team who has dual responsibilities of covering a geographic area while also providing headquarters representation and support to that team's field-based Information Resource Officers. R/IIP/G team-based IROs monitor reporting of IROs assigned to their geographic areas and work closely with their corresponding Regional Bureaus. IROs from geographic teams brief officials as needed. Washington, D.C.-based IROs work

together as a standing team to develop policies, program guidance and new initiatives that serve IRCs worldwide.

10 FAM 652.5-1 Information Resource Officer Work Requirements

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

a.   Visit the majority of posts in their assigned regions at least twice a year. During the visits, the Information Resource Officer will work with the Public Affairs Officer and other officers in countries of designated responsibility to develop the most effective mix of information services and resources to support Mission Program Plan objectives and public diplomacy goals. Core responsibilities of the Information Resource Officer are to:

b.   Counsel and assist posts in developing their information capability to communicate with target audiences on key Mission Program Plan and public affairs issues;

c.   Evaluate host country information infrastructure and determine realistic levels and applications of information technology required to conduct outreach and information dissemination programs consistent with established Office of International Information Programs expectations;

d.   Evaluate management policies and practices affecting post information capability and advise posts of alternatives to improve effectiveness and productivity;

e.   Assess the professional development needs of Foreign Service National staff and develop training programs as appropriate;

f.   Assist Information Resource Centers and missions abroad in the effective use of IIP produced information resources;

g.   Report to the Coordinator for International Information Programs (R/IIP) and the regional bureaus on the status of post efforts to promote mission program plan objectives through cost-effective use of electronic and print resources;

h.   Maintain a realistic travel schedule that meets the needs of constituent posts and Office of International Information Programs priorities, supplementing official consultations with regular correspondence and electronic communications as needed; and

i.   Develop and maintain contacts within host country information communities in area of responsibility and represent public diplomacy interests as appropriate.

10 FAM 652.5-2 Information Resource Officer Reports

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

a.   Information Resource Officers are required to file reports as soon as possible but no later than one month after completing their consultation and debriefing with the Public Affairs Officer or designate at post. Reports are expected to focus on the effectiveness of the program in advancing Mission Program Plan objectives, and will include recommendations for further In-formation Resource Center program development. Information Resource Officer visit reports should follow the established format, not exceeding 3-4 pages in length. Address reports to the post Public Affairs Officer, and cop-ies should be distributed to the team leader of the appropriate geographic team, the team leader for information resources, and the regional bureau's country affairs officer. Geographic team leaders are responsible for re-sponding to the reports and for coordinating follow-up support with the of-fice of international information programs and the regional bureaus, as ap-propriate.

b.   In addition to regular reports submitted following each visit to posts in his or her area of assigned responsibility, the Information Resource Offi-cer is also required to submit an annual home post report, usually in Octo-ber. This report will reflect the highlights of the home post's Information Re-source Center program, where the Information Resource Officers spend the majority of his or her time, during the previous fiscal year. Home post re-ports follow the same established format as regional visit reports.

c.   The Office of the Inspector General requires the two most recent Information Resource Officer reports as a part of the pre-inspection docu-mentation on posts to be inspected.

10 FAM 652.5-3 Information Resource Officer Evaluations

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

In accordance with 3 FAH-1 2813.3, evaluations for regional Information Resource Officers assigned to posts abroad will be the Public Affairs Officer or designee at the home post of the regional officer. Posts serviced by the regional Information Resource Officer will submit evaluations of the officer's performance to the rating officer to use in preparing the evaluation report. The reviewing officer for field-based Information Resource Officers is the Team Leader of the geographic team to which the Information Resource Officer is assigned. The rating officer for Washington, D.C.-based Informa-tion Resource Officers is the Team Leader of the team to which the Infor-mation Resource Officer is assigned. The reviewing officer for Washington, D.C.-based Information Resource Officers is the Team Leader for Informa-tion Resources.

10 FAM 652.5-4 Information Resource Center Annual Plan

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

a.   Following the established format, each Information Resource Center is required to establish an Annual Plan which documents the post's commitment to using Information Resource Center resources to meet both public diplomacy goals and mission relevant information needs of key mission staff; gives Office of International Information Programs and Regional Bureau officials relevant, up-to-date information about the programs, the technological environment of the Information Resource center, its clients, resource base and personnel; and provides the contextual framework and action plan for Information Resource Officer consultations. The Information Resource Center Annual Plan is drafted by the Information Resource Officer in consultation with the Information Resource Center Director and his or her U.S. supervisor, then cleared by the Public Affairs Officer. Intended not to exceed 5 pages in length, the Annual Plan should be revised annually, usually in conjunction with the Mission Program Plan process. The Information Resource Center Annual Plan should be forwarded to the Team Leader of the appropriate geographic team, the Team Leader for Information Resources, and the Regional Bureau's Country Affairs Officer.

b.   The Office of the Inspector General requires a copy of the Information Resource Center Annual Plan as a part of the pre-inspection documentation on posts to be inspected.

10 FAM 653 OPERATING GUIDELINES FOR INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTERS

10 FAM 653.1 Services

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

Specialized research services and outreach programs are the basic services of the Information Resource Center (IRC). The development of new information products in support of U.S. policy goals specifically targeted to local audiences are a key component of the IRCs outreach programs. These products, which may present the full range of discussion on any issue, are often developed from R/IIP information products and may be disseminated through Selected Dissemination of Information (SDI) programs, an *Article Alert* service, the mission home page, electronic outreach services, or a variety of similar services. Because an Information Resource Center is committed to deploying the majority of its resources in support of mission goals, services to the broader public should be carried out within those limitations necessary to ensure that the primary mission of the Information Resource Center is met.

10 FAM 653.2 Audiences

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

The primary audiences of the Information Resource Center are those members of the local community who have been identified by the mission as important to the conduct of bilateral relations with the United States, usually members of the host country government, political institutions, non-government organizations, and the media, business and academic communities. In some countries, the Information Resource Center also provides services to a more general, secondary audience through limited public access hours.

10 FAM 653.3 Staff

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

The modern, electronic Information Resource Center must be staffed by fully trained information experts with an extensive knowledge of the United States and U.S. research resources, the skills to use sophisticated electronic databases, and the ability to rapidly identify, retrieve, authenticate, interpret, package and disseminate information on the wide range of complex issues identified in the Mission Program Plan. The Information Resource Center Standard Job Descriptions PER/OE/HRM Supplement to 3 FAH 2 Chapter 4, Appendix J-6010 USIS Librarian Standards, Information Resource Center Standard Job Descriptions should be applied to all appropriate IRC positions. IRC staff should expect to receive on-going training to ensure competence in the rapidly changing electronic information environment.

10 FAM 653.4 Information Resources

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

a.   Basic to the Information Resource Center concept is the migration from the print to the digital environment; however, it is recognized not all information is most efficiently or cost-effectively accessible in the electronic format, and not all local information infrastructures adequately support electronic resources. While electronic information resources are the preferred medium, Information Resource Centers will maintain a mix of print and electronic sources for the foreseeable future.

b.   Whatever their format, information resources will be selected for their value in providing information that advances understanding of U.S. policies and the political, social and intellectual context which has shaped them. The information resource base available through an Information Resource Center should be balanced and representative of the prominent currents of past and contemporary U.S. thought, and should provide:

(1) Primary source documentation of U.S. Government domestic and foreign affairs policies in effect and under formulation with emphasis on mission program plan objectives;

(2) Representative examples of thoughtful discussion and debate of U.S. Government policy by the U.S. media and research communities;

(3) Historical and contextual background to current U.S. Government policies;

(4) Insights to the evolution of U.S. values and to the structure, function, and organization of U.S. political and social institutions; and

(5) Information on specific areas of bilateral U.S./host country interest and developing foreign affairs issues.

10 FAM 653.5 Reporting

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

The program and activities of the Information Resource Center is established annually, in coordination with the Information Resource Officer, in the Information Resource Center Annual Plan. Information Resource Officers are required to report regularly on the Information Resource Centers in their areas of geographic responsibility. In addition, Information Resource Centers are expected to produce regular reports demonstrating the effectiveness of the program in meeting Mission Program Plan goals and in reaching its targeted audiences. Reports should be produced regularly, either monthly or quarterly, and should also include highlights of interest to mission officials. Information Resource Centers are should also contribute routinely to post's reporting to the Regional Bureaus, in the format defined in the Government Performance and Reporting Act (GPRA).

10 FAM 653.6 Promoting the Information Resource Center

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

The promotion of the Information Resource Center's services should be an on-going activity with targeted audience members. This can be done through special orientation programs demonstrating IRC resources and services to mission staff, and through other specialized programming for specifically targeted members of the mission audience.

10 FAM 653.7 Fee Recycling

(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)

a.   In Pub. L. 100-204, amended by Pub. L. 101-246, Congress granted Information Resource Centers at U.S. missions abroad the authority to charge fees for certain services and to use the proceeds for the expansion of IRC services. The fee recycling legislation clearly states that income generated from this program is meant to supplement, not offset, funds appropriated for IRC programs.

b.   Guidelines for fee recycling include:

(1) **Membership Fees**. Membership fees cannot under any circumstances be charged for the use of the Information Resource Center;

(2) **Services Covered**. Fees may be charged for photocopying, printing of electronic and microform resources; interlibrary loan services; online database searches and associated telecommunications costs and print-outs; document delivery; and mailing of Information Resource Center materials;

(3) **Services Not Covered**. Fees cannot be charged for the sell of books, periodicals, or other materials the post would normally purchase for its own collections;

(4) **Reporting Requirements**. R/IIP/G/IR grants approval of post recycling levels. Posts must report to R/IIP/G/IR and appropriate Department of State budget offices on a routine basis monies collected under the recycling program; and

(5) **Guidance**. R/IIP/G/IR provides guidance to posts on specific recycling activities and expenditures.

10 FAM 654 THROUGH 659 UNASSIGNED